

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LILONG 00694 100937Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PM-05 INR-10 /043 W

-----058295 100946Z /10

R 100715Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1866

C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0694

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FOR DEPTY. ASST. SEC. WALKER FROM STEVENSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MI, US

SUBJECT: MALAWI ARMY OFFICER TRAINING - IMET

REF: (A) STATE 116668; (B) LILONGWE 0627; (C) LILONGWE A-03,
FEB. 9, 1978 (PARA 3);

1. WAS PLEASED TO NOTE IN YOUR LETTER TO MR. ROBERT J. MURRAY YOUR BELIEF THAT A CASE CAN BE MADE FOR PUTTING MODEST FUNDS INTO SUBJECT PROGRAM. I REGRET THAT IT WAS NOT SPELLED OUT MORE FULLY IN REF (B) THAT SUBJECT REQUEST FOR TRAINING HAS BEEN RENEWED EACH YEAR FOR PAST 4 YEARS BY CIC MALAWIAN ARMY AND WITH STRONG ENDORSEMENT FROM THIS EMBASSY. HOPEFULLY THIS WAS MADE CLEAR TO YOU PRESUMABLY IN BRIEFING MEMO FROM AF/E. EACH YEAR THE ARMY'S IMPATIENCE WITH OUR INABILITY TO MAKE ANY POSITIVE RESPONSE HAS NOTICEABLY INCREASED. AS THEY VIEW WITH INCREASING CONCERN THE GROWTH OF MARXIST ELEMENTS IN THE AREA, THEY ARE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY A COUNTRY WHICH HAS ALLIED ITSELF WITH THE FREE WORLD, GENERALLY SUPPORTS THE U.S. POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND IS EAGER TO HAVE CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. MILITARY SHOULD BE DENIED THIS MODEST REQUEST. QUITE FRANKLY NEITHER DO I, PARTICULARLY
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IN VIEW OF THE SECRETARY'S PLEDGE THAT: "WE WILL CONSIDER SUMPATHETICALLY APPEALS FOR ASSISTANCE FROM COUNTRIES WHICH ARE THREATENED BY A BUILD-UP OF FOREIGN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND ADVISORS ON THEIR BORDERS, IN THE HORN AND ELSEWHERE."

2. YOU WILL UNDERSTAND OUR INTEREST HERE, THEREFORE, IN LEARNING THE RATIONALE FOR YOUR ASSIGNING MALAWI "A

RATHER LOW PRIORITY IN COMPETITION WITH OTHER NEW IMET PROGRAMS THAT MIGHT BE STARTED UP IN AFRICA IN THE COMING YEARS." IT SEEMS TO ME OUR CASE IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT SHOULD BE ONE OF THE STRONGER ONES UNLESS WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE GEO-POLITICAL FORCES SURROUNDING THIS SMALL COUNTRY ARE SUCH THAT A RADICAL RE-ALIGNMENT HERE IN THE FUTURE IS PROBABLY INEVITABLE. PERSONALLY, I DO NOT THINK THIS IS THE CASE AND URGE DEPARTMENT TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT. IF WE COULD JUST PROVIDE NEXT YEAR FOR ONE OFFICER IT COULD BE VERY IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE MILITARY TOWARD THE U.S., AND AS I HAVE EMPHASIZED IN VARIOUS REPORTS FOR OVER 3 YEARS, THE MILITARY HERE IS LIKELY TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE POST-BANDA SUCCESSION.

STEVENSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY TRAINING, MILITARY PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LILONG00694
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780198-0089
Format: TEL
From: LILONGWE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780574/aaaacleo.tel
Line Count: 77
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ca5030a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 116668, 78 LILONGWE 627, 78 LILONGWE A-3
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2737772
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALAWI ARMY OFFICER TRAINING - IMET
TAGS: MASS, MI, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ca5030a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014